



THE FIRST WORD

CELEBRATING THE LIVING WORD
FOR A GROWING CHURCH.

MARCH 2021

A Time for Sharing

We have just started into the church season of Lent and turning our focus to the Passion narrative of Jesus Christ. At this time, we traditionally are used to hearing messages about how to focus on developing one's spiritual walk and disciplines. However, when I began to read Jesus' Passion account this year, something stood out to me. Jesus spends an extraordinary amount of time telling the disciples that they needed to be aware of the time and context in which they are living in. Jesus is quite clear that some times are meant for self-enrichment and other times for caring for one's neighbor. We are able to discern the different times by being observant of what is happening in the world and by the work of the Holy Spirit on our hearts and minds.

The disciples are unable to grasp why Mary would waste good oil on Jesus' feet when they are gathered with Jesus for an ordinary occasion. (Mark 14:1-10) What the disciples had not come to realize is that any time one can feel Christ's presence in their life, it is to be valued. The fellowship with one another is also something they assume will always be there. The disciples within a few days will be called to the ends of the world, and the twelve disciples will not have the benefit of this time of fellowship with one another and Jesus. Whereas the woman recognizes that this moment is special and that times are changing and that they should value where they are in the present and prepare for the future.

Jesus later on invites his disciples to gather at the Garden of Gethsemane to pray for him. (Mark 14:32-42) Jesus opens up to Peter, James, and John about His concerns, and He asks them to keep Him in prayer at the present time. At the time that his closest friends could reach out and support Him and pray to God fervently that Jesus might have strength and peace, they slept. I am sure it is not that they did not care about Jesus, but they failed to embrace the need in the present moment. Jesus stated multiple times what He would have to go through, and Peter and the disciples instead of being comforting, dismissed Jesus's reality. What the disciples will learn through the Passion is that everyone, including the Son of God, has struggles they have to overcome, and it is through compassionately listening to their concerns and prayer for them in the present moment that we can be a blessing to our friends and neighbors.

Finally, Jesus teaches us what it means to be a follower of Christ. In Mark 14:27, Jesus predicts that Peter and the rest of the disciples will fall away out of fear. Peter not only says that he will never leave Jesus, but when Christ is arrested, Peter is willing to take up the sword to change the circumstances. Jesus rebukes Peter and says that scripture must be fulfilled for it is God's will. What Jesus is asking from His followers is not to change the circumstances of the world, but to be observant of how

God is working in the world. The women did not come to Calvary reluctantly to see a friend hung on a cross, but instead they witness their salvation earned for them. They gather at the tomb early in the morning to prepare Jesus's body for decomposition, and yet they witness the hope of bodily resurrection. The disciples gather in fear of what the world can do to them, and Christ allows them to touch and see that God can bring healing to our deepest wounds.

My point in writing all this is that it seems to me that through this pandemic, we have had plenty of time to self-reflect and focus on our needs. At the present time, I see many people within the church and outside of it that are fearful of the future and struggling to find hope. Therefore, during this Lenten season, I want to encourage you to take some time to reach out to those who you have been out of contact with and place value on just being present with each other. When your friends and family open up to you with their cares and concerns, listen with compassion and earnestly pray for them while they are present. When you get wearied by the ways of the world, know that we are not called to change the world by ourselves, but instead called to be witnesses of God overcoming all evil. By doing this, not only will we be a blessing to those we live amongst, but we also will grow individually and become closer to God just as Lent is supposed to be.

Pastor Ian Reid

FROM YOUR COUNCIL PRESIDENT -

As I reported in last month's article, the office of Council President was not filled during January's council meeting because of how big the President's role and responsibilities have become. As a response to this situation, I called a special Executive Board meeting to discuss this issue. Together we came up with a plan to restructure our council into "teams" or "committees" in order to divvy up work tasks that previously fell on the president to handle. Paul Freeman did a ton of research on this subject, which led to development of the following list of 6 council-led committees. Here is a preliminary description of these committees:

MUTUAL MINISTRY – will be the "Human Resources" arm of council – in charge of job descriptions, staffing policies, personnel records, performance reviews, filling staff vacancies, etc.

WORSHIP & MUSIC – supporting our worship services and everything pertaining to worship – choir and other music, Altar Guild, acolytes, crucifers, ushers, lectors, communion assistants, audio/video/lighting.

PROPERTY - oversee the maintenance, repair, and upkeep of our aging facility. Oversee capital improvement projects. Manage the role of Property Coordinator.

OUTREACH – encourage individuals and groups to witness for Christ by sharing their faith in word and deed. Welcome new members into our congregation. Oversee events we put on for parishioners and for the community, manage use of our facilities, etc.

EDUCATION – assess and respond to meet the educational needs of our

congregation, covering all age groups. Sunday School, VBS, youth & family, catechism & confirmation, Camp Luther, etc.

FINANCE – advise, assist, and support the Treasurer in carrying out their duties. Monitor and report on investment performance. Advise council on financial health of congregation.

This new council structure was presented at February's council meeting and was wholeheartedly accepted. Nominations for Council President were then held, and I accepted a nomination for this "new" Council President's role. I look forward to leading council through a transition to this new structure, which I believe will ultimately benefit the entire congregation. The transition will take several months, so stay tuned for further updates!

In other council business, we discussed and approved funds for several new maintenance issues including emergency replacement of a bad pump motor for the Education Building heating system, and replacement of floor tiles damaged by water in the children's play area of the Fellowship Hall. Equipment has arrived for the computer network upgrade, and Jarad Ice will schedule installation soon. Our January financial report was very favorable, with January income just \$172 short of meeting January expenses. You can find January's financial numbers on page 3 of this newsletter. On behalf of council, I wish to thank each of our congregation members for continuing to faithfully support our church as you are able. Council reviewed our WV State COVID numbers which have continued to

decrease, and decided to reopen our facilities for certain additional approved activities. A list of these approved facility uses can be found on page 9 of this newsletter. And for those of you who have chosen to attend Sunday and Wednesday in-person worship services, isn't it great to be able to worship with your fellow parishioners again? I think I can see light at the end of the tunnel (and it's not an oncoming train)!

Lastly, here are a couple of friendly reminders:

(1) Have you read your 2020 Annual Congregational Report that you received last month? Weren't you amazed at all we accomplished during the COVID pandemic?

(2) Council invites each of you to participate in your church's Lent worship services at 12 noon and 7 pm each Wednesday. You are also invited to participate in our various special Lent activities, including the soup can collection contest for our Food Pantry, the sharing of Lent soup dinner recipes in lieu of having Lent dinners, reading your Lent devotionals, and participating in Pastor Ian's special weekly Facebook Lent studies.

Your Church Council is always open to hearing any questions, comments, ideas, or concerns from the congregation. Please feel free to contact myself, Pastor Ian, or any Council member.

Yours in Christ,
Doug Woolley

A note from your Treasurer -

2021 Financial Information:

	<u>January 2021</u>	<u>2021 YTD</u>
Total Income	\$23,595	\$23,595
Total Expense:	<u>(\$23,767)</u>	<u>(\$23,767)</u>
Gain or Loss for Month/Year:	(\$172)	(\$172)

NOTE: Donations to the G.I.F.T. Fund (General Improvement Fund) are used for improvements to the church facility.



Did you know you can give to the church by linking up your Kroger reward card with Community Rewards? Then Kroger will give us a portion of your spending!
Use code **HJ264** to find First Lutheran Church!



If you use Amazon, consider using amazon smile! With amazon smile, a portion of what you spend will be giving back to the church. With no extra charge to you! Just use:
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GIVE+



1. Download the app
2. Find First Lutheran Church by typing our Zip Code 26101
3. Choose the amount and how often you would like to give to the church.

Any questions?
Contact Paul Freeman.
304-488-1841

March Youth & Family Events

March 7: no youth

March 14: Classic Plastics Play Time: 4 pm- Meet at Classic Plastics in the mall (between Dunhams and Belks). Arcade play is \$5 for all you can play, or 50 cents a game.

March 20: Spring has SPRUNG!! We will plant some flower seeds and play outside games. (In fellowship hall if it is bad weather)

March 27: Quick bread-making: 4 pm. We will make a bread that some churches use for communion. Each family will have their own workspace and supplies and loaf to take home.

April 3: Egg Hunt for First Lutheran families: 10 am on the church lawn. We will meet outdoors and divide up by age group to find eggs!

****Anyone who would like to donate eggs, please do! (Much of our egg stash was given out last year when we did at-home egg hunts) We would also appreciate empty plastic eggs, wrapped candy or prizes we could give away!****



LILY ORDERS:

Easter is April 4, 2021!

Please fill out this order form to order your lilies!

.....

of Lilies _____ x \$9.00 = \$ _____

In honor of: _____

In memory of: _____

Food Pantry News:

Your Food Pantry is still going strong! Thank you all for the support with the Souper Bowl 2021!! The totals as of February 21, 2021 are:

NORTH SIDE: 106 cans + \$660 = \$766

SOUTH SIDE: 10 cans + \$60 = \$70

OHIO: 38 cans + \$90 = \$128

The competition is running until February 28th, so watch for a OneCall email on the totals when the competition is completed!

In Christ,
Susie McNemar



Liberty Street Community Garden in 2021

Although the ground is still frozen and covered with snow, it will soon be time for planting. In March, we will be starting several cold-hardy vegetables outside, including cabbage, onions and lettuce. Becca and her MOPS group will be helping to get the seeds in the ground tentatively scheduled for March 19 from 10AM-12N. It should be a great experience for the kids, and for the moms that haven't gardened before! We will be holding a work day Saturday, March 13th starting at 10:00AM to get things ready for the early planting. Since garden prep this time of year is dependent on weather, work session alerts and reminders will be made by text, phone and email. Please let the church office know if you would like to be notified when garden sessions are planned or altered.

Because of the pandemic, fresh vegetables could be hard to come by this summer. Our garden can make a real impact on the health and well-being of our community if we can make it productive. We have some funding available from Thrivent Financial and the Bread of Life Ministry for supplies, so we should be able to get a lot done. Hands are needed. Come help when you can!

Anyone hoping to get involved in garden activities should contact Mike Lockney by voice or text at 304-615-3981 or call the church office.

Mike Lockney



March 2021 Hymns and Scriptures

In effort to ensure that everyone has the information for the services on Sundays, the Hymns for the 10 am service and the Scripture verses for both services, it will now be printed in the First Word!

March 7: 3rd Sunday in Lent

Processional	In the Cross of God I Glory	LBW 104	First Reading	Exodus 20:1-17
Offering	My God, How Wonderful Thou Art	LBW 524	Psalm Reading	Psalm 19
Communion	In the Hour of Trial	LBW 106	Second Reading	1 Corinthians 1:18-25
Recessional	Lift High the Cross	LBW 377	Gospel Reading	John 2:13-22

March 14: 4th Sunday in Lent

Processional	Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound	LBW 448	First Reading	Numbers 21:4-9
Offering	My Faith Looks Up to Thee	LBW 479	Psalm Reading	Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22
Communion	What a Friend We Have in Jesus	LBW 439	Second Reading	Ephesians 2:1-10
Recessional	Christ, the Life of All the Living	LBW 97	Gospel Reading	John 3:14-21

March 21: 5th Sunday in Lent

Processional	When I Survey the Wonderous Cross	LBW 482	First Reading	Jeremiah 31:31-34
Offering	Glory Be to Jesus	LBW 95	Psalm Reading	Psalm 51:1-12
Communion	Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed	LBW 98	Second Reading	Hebrews 5:5-10
Recessional	Oh, that the Lord Would Guide My Way	LBW 480	Gospel Reading	John 12:20-33

March 28: Palm Sunday

Processional	All Glory Laud & Honor	LBW 108	First Reading	Isaiah 50:4-9a
Offering	Jesus, I Will Ponder Now	LBW 115	Psalm Reading	Psalm 31:9-16
Communion	Were You There (vs1-3)	LBW 92	Second Reading	Philippians 2:5-11
Recessional	Ride On	Insert	Gospel Reading	Mark 14:1-15:47

Please note: Depending on COVID numbers, communion may not be served and we will not sing a communion hymn.

Lent and Easter Information:

Tuesday, March 2nd - March 23rd

10am - Pastor's Bible Study (Lent Devotional)

Wednesday, March 3rd - March 24th

(There will be no meals)

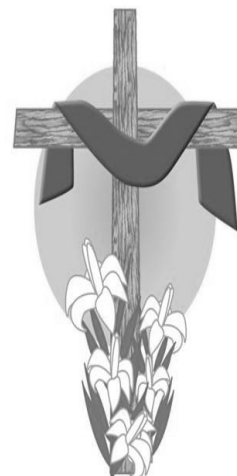
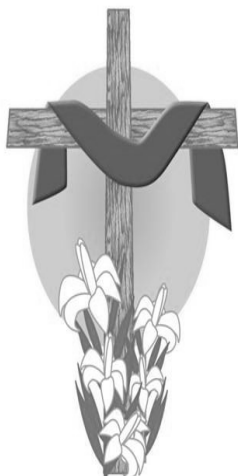
12pm - Mid Day Worship

7 pm - Holden Evening Prayer

(Also will be on Facebook LIVE)

March 28 - April 3rd - Holy Week

Sunday, April 4 - Easter



Upcoming Events



MARCH

Our Church is currently open for in-person worship in the Sanctuary. The Church building is open for limited use upon Council approval. Watch/listen for 'ONE CALL' updates.

Strict rules will continue to apply to everyone who enters our Church building. Until further notice -- everyone will wear a face mask and social distance when in the facility.

Sundays:

8:30-9:30 am – ZOOM Fellowship Hour
9 am – Sunday School for children & Beyond the Basics classes
10 am –worship in Sanctuary with communion, and on Facebook LIVE

NOTE: Drive-up Communion on Sundays in Alley - 11:15 am-1:00 pm (Please enter alley from parking lot side)

YOUTH GROUP: Please refer to details in this issue for March events

Tuesdays:

9:00 am - Men's Gathering in Fellowship Hall
10:00 am – Pastor's Bible Study via Facebook LIVE
6:30 pm - Woman's Bible Study (starts March 16th)

Wednesday Lenten services:

March 3,10, 17 and 24

12 Noon – Mid Day Worship (no Facebook)
7 pm Holden Evening Prayer in-person and Facebook LIVE

Be alert: Daylight Saving Time starts March 14

March 28 – Palm Sunday – 10:00 am (in-person and Facebook LIVE)

WEEKLY FOOD PANTRY: 9:30 – 11:30 AM Tuesdays and Wednesdays

Please stay safe and well!

NOTE:

You can find the bulletins for Sunday Worship in the weekly email that is sent out via OneCall.

If you need Pastoral care, please contact Pastor Ian on his cell phone (304) 966-6431 or call the church office at (304) 428-6174.

The church office is still not open normal business hours, however, Amanda still has access to the phones Monday - Thursday from 9am - 3pm. If you need assistance for anything, please call the church office (304)428-6174 and she will be able to answer. Also, the voicemail is monitored as well, so leave a message, if needed.

LENT SOUP MEAL **INFORMATION:**

Since we are not having meals during lent due to COVID, please check out the Facebook page or email at the beginning of every week for a soup recipe that you can fix! The recipes come from members of the congregation. Be sure to also post a picture of your soup on Facebook once you make it!

MARCH 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2 Men's Gathering 9am Pastor's Bible Study 10am	3 Lent Service 12pm Lent Service 7pm VIA Facebook LIVE AND In person	4	5	6
7 ZOOM Fellowship Hour 8:30am Children's Sunday School 9am And in person Worship Service 10am VIA Facebook LIVE Drive thru Communion 11:15am-1pm	8	9 Men's Gathering 9am Pastor's Bible Study 10am	10 Lent Service 12pm Lent Service 7pm VIA Facebook LIVE AND In person	11	12	13
14 ZOOM Fellowship Hour 8:30am Children's Sunday School 9am And in person Worship Service 10am VIA Facebook LIVE Drive thru Communion 11:15am-1pm	15 Staff Meeting 11am	16 Men's Gathering 9am Pastor's Bible Study 10am Council Meeting 6pm Woman's Bible Study 6:30pm	17 Lent Service 12pm Lent Service 7pm VIA Facebook LIVE AND In person	18	19	20 First Word Articles DUE
21 ZOOM Fellowship Hour 8:30am Children's Sunday School 9am And in person Worship Service 10am VIA Facebook LIVE Drive thru Communion 11:15am-1pm	22	23 Men's Gathering 9am Pastor's Bible Study 10am Woman's Bible Study 6:30pm	24 Lent Service 12pm Lent Service 7pm VIA Facebook LIVE AND In person	25 Food Truck Day	26	27
28 ZOOM Fellowship Hour 8:30am Children's Sunday School 9am And in person Worship Service 10am VIA Facebook LIVE Drive thru Communion 11:15am-1pm *Palm Sunday*	29	30 Men's Gathering 9am Woman's Bible Study 6:30pm	31			

LIST OF INDOOR FACILITY USES APPROVED BY COUNCIL:

NOTES:

- 1) Sanctuary and Education buildings have been reopened to pre-scheduled meetings and events which have been approved by Council. Masks and social distancing rules apply.
 - 2) The status of the WV State's color coded chart is being monitored to help determine our church operations and facility closures. If Wood County moves to ORANGE, all in-person meetings and facility uses would be temporarily cancelled (except worship services, food pantry, and individual office use). If Wood County moves to RED, in-person worship would also be temporarily cancelled and replaced with Facebook Live only.
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SANCTUARY:

- 1) In-Sanctuary worship - Sunday mornings 10-11:30 am. (also on Facebook Live). Seating limits apply.
- 2) In-Sanctuary Lent services - Wednesdays 12 noon and 7 pm. Seating limits apply.
- 3) In-Sanctuary funerals - may be held in Sanctuary on Tue, Wed, or Thur. only. Seating limits apply.

FELLOWSHIP HALL:

- 1) Weekly Men's Gathering - Tuesday mornings 9 - 10:30 am.
- 2) Monthly Alzheimer's Group (Joe Lantz) - 1st Wed. 1:00 pm (when they resume meeting).
- 3) Monthly Staff Zoom meeting - Monday before Council meeting, 11 am.

EDUCATION BUILDING - 1st FLOOR:

- 1) Church office and Financial office. Hours vary.
- 2) Back Hallway. Food Pantry - Tues. & Wed. 9:30 - 11:30 am, plus food truck deliveries.
- 3) Choir Room. Choir practice - Weekly - Wed. 7:30 pm (as scheduled).
- 4) Library & Parlor. Women's Bible Study - Tues. 6:30 pm (Starting March 16th).
- 5) Room next to Nursery. Backpack Ministry (as needed).
- 6) Pastor's office.
- 7) Library & Parlor. Beyond Basics Sunday School Class - Sunday 9am

EDUCATION BUILDING - 2nd FLOOR:

- 1) Children's Sunday School. Sunday mornings 9 am.



First Lutheran Church

PASTOR

The Rev. Ian Reid

(email: pastorianreid@gmail.com)

CHURCH OFFICE

AMANDA WHITLATCH

304-428-6174 (email: flcsec@yahoo.com)

Open by appointment Monday through Thursday;
Closed Friday

YOUTH COORDINATOR

Becca Reid

304-966-6430 (email: cup_nstu@yahoo.com)

NURSERY STAFF

Our nursery is currently closed

WORSHIP TIMES

Sunday Morning Worship, in Sanctuary when possible - 10:00 am

- First visit? Please call ahead to reserve your seat
- Masks and social distancing required

HOLY COMMUNION CELEBRATED:

During Sunday Morning Worship in Sanctuary when possible

Drive-through by Rear Alley overhang entrance -

- Sundays 11 am - 1 pm

WEBSITE: firstlutheranparkersburg.com

CHURCH COUNCIL

Doug Woolley, President, 304-295-9502

Paul Freeman, Vice-President, 304-488-1841

Jared Ice, Secretary, 304-771-7177

Tom Curry, 304-834-4008

Jim Hamric, 304-483-2727

Lisa Hutzler, 304-295.5040

Gerry Kohler, 304-991-5506

Mary Lewis, 740-989-2243

Dr. Ryan Lowers, 304-834-9777

Brian Nokleby, 304-375-2260

Carol Petersen, 304-863-6891

Robyn Rice, 304-488-6773

Lisa Martin, Treasurer Appointed, 304-422-8240

Elizabeth Martin, Treasurer Appointed,

304-422-8240

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